



KEEPING ARIZONA SAFE, STRONG AND PROSPEROUS

Supporting Arizona Teachers

Nothing is more important to success in education than qualified teachers. We need to do more to ensure a healthy supply of well-qualified teachers who know and can teach the skills needed to succeed in today's complicated, fast-changing world of work.

In her 2006 State of the State speech, Governor Janet Napolitano proposed a two-part plan supporting Arizona teachers. First, a pay raise for every teacher in Arizona. Second, funding teacher professional development programs statewide based on standards created to ensure these programs result in increases in student achievement and developed with the latest research and advances in technology and education.

Teacher Salary

Teachers need to be paid a wage that matches the trust we place in them. We cannot continue to pay a paltry salary for work that is shaping the future of our children.

The Governor is asking the legislature to support an increase in the base salary for teachers, so that every teacher in Arizona makes at least \$30,000 a year. The Governor has also asked the legislature to appropriate the dollars necessary to give every teacher a raise this year.

Teacher Professional Development

Next, Governor Napolitano proposed a statewide system for professional development and called for expansion of the highly successful principles of Arizona's nationally recognized Career Ladder program. Through this program, the State Board of Education will provide school districts with technical assistance and guidance schools need to support teacher development.

Career Ladder is already used in 28 Arizona school districts. It requires professional development base on the needs of students as indicated by the data, evaluates teacher performance based on student performance, provides incentives to mentor and coach, and rewards teachers for success with increases in pay.

The Career Ladder concept will be integrated with the Governor's Master Teacher program. The Master Teacher program already accomplishes two goals: it helps keep ambitious, bright teachers in Arizona schools by giving them increased levels of responsibility; and it gives new and struggling teachers a chance to learn from successful ones.

"We need to recognize that the education of the teachers themselves shouldn't just stop when they graduate from college," the Governor said. "To teach with excellence, they have to keep learning, stay in step with the world of knowledge; it's how they best teach their students."